

OCI No. 3408/63

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
3 December 1963

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Summary of Terrorist Activities in Venezuela
during November 1963

1. Venezuelan Communist terrorists have been using violence for some time to attain the ouster of the democratic government of President Betancourt. They used the same method in unsuccessful attempts to sabotage the 1 December elections, and they can be expected to use their extremist measures in the next few months in trying to prevent the inauguration of President-elect Raul Leoni on 2 March 1964.
2. During November 1963, Venezuelan terrorists aimed principally at sabotaging or discrediting the elections. Extremist groups stepped up their activity in the latter half of November, reaching a new all-time intensity between 19 and 22 November. Although the number of incidents then dropped, some of the most spectacular acts occurred after 22 November. These include the sending of packaged bombs to the chief presidential candidates and a US Embassy official, the hijacking of a Venezuelan Avensa commercial airliner, and the kidnapping of Lt. Col. James K. Chenault, Deputy Chief of the US Army Mission. Chenault has not yet been released. The group which hijacked the plane dropped anti-election leaflets from it and then forced the pilot to fly to Trinidad.
3. The bulk of the attacks were on police and military installations and personnel, on political parties and their headquarters, candidates and rallies, and on public communication and transportation facilities. Attacks on US-owned property were numerous. Among the US-owned targets were installations of Pan American Airways, UPI News Agency, Pepsi Cola, Coca Cola, DuPont Corporation, Firestone Tire Company, IBM Corporation, Colgate-Palmolive Company, General Electric Company, oil companies, gasoline stations, and supermarkets.